

Alsop, Joe - JDW's note on his 11/30/72 column.

Reminds me of two pleasants and one unpleasant.

Before that, your ref to Chennault reminds me that Lesar told me that Peter Dale Scott has some assassination interests, perhaps a JFK book, according to Freed of CREI (uncertain name, The Glass House Tapes). His The War Conspiracy is quite good on that stuff and Tommy the Cork, as I think I noted in a comment about Bill Costello. If you know Scott, I'd be interested in knowing if I can help him without hurt to my own unprinted work and vice versa. His book is impressive. But I fear he will not be able to avoid nuts and without much work won't be able to discriminate between fact and fancies.

Although there was nothing pleasant about the nature of the investigation on which I worked for the Senate, it was rewarding because it was worthwhile work, laying the basis for major changes in working conditions and in corporate attitudes toward labor spying, etc. After some field work and briefing the first of our public hearings, something I'd never done before and based on waste paper we had recovered after it was torn up - hurrah for Scotch tape, the new - I became the committee's editor. This included being in charge of the record, letting witnesses go over their testimony, getting it and the reports printed and distributed, and a certain amount of detail work at the hearings. This was before the day of electrostatic copiers. Photostates were expensive and took much time. So, we did our best to have extra copies of exhibits for the press. We could mimeograph very few, but we retyped all. Aside from those needed for the proceeding, I had the extras and always gave them to the press. We generally had two long tables and I just about always had at least one copy for each. When there were more, I passed them out. Alsop (I then thought of him as Allslop) covered for the old Herald-Rib. This was before his columning days. He was extraordinarily fat. Fairly neat for such a monstrous size, but the size alone suggested that fatness was almost a fetish. He was also cunning and nasty. He would, as could any of the corps, have a pretty good idea of when there would be something hot. Those days he was just about first of the press into the hearing room, sat himself in the chair closest to me, and stole any lone copy of any exhibit he wanted. This meant that the others at that table could not use it. When it became obvious, he ~~was~~ evolved a means of shuffling them on which I'm not now clear (it was 1936!). But I think he'd delay passing some so that he'd have a cover for those he wanted to pocket. Nice guy, eh? Almost as nice and ethical a reporter as Merriman Smith.

The Kungsholm reminds me that in the summer of 1941 I had about a half-dozen profitable Nazi exposes commissioned, part of them part of a series on cartels. One I recall was a doozy, on Schering A.G.'s hidden U.S. front, in Bloomfield, N.J. The government took them over after my piece appeared. Well, there was this good time, all that moola coming in. So, I took Lil to New York for a few fun days. I remember it included Maurice Evans. Then I put her on the Kungsholm for a West Indies cruise and went to work. By the time she returned I had earned enough to pay off my accumulated debt, extensive for those days, bought a new Plymouth for cash (it was a 1941, so I guess it was 1941, for it was warm weather), and had some cash in the bank when she got back. She returned with two gallons of the best 151 proof Haitian rum, one for a friend, one for me; and a box of Por Larranaga Cuban cigars for me. The managing editor of Click, now a medical editor, got drunk on a couple of swigs. Lil had to leave the loot in NYC and I got it next trip. That was Allan Chase. He wrote a much-romanticized novel based on the things he saw me do in those days. I exposed our own Cuban Embassy, including Messerschmidt and the Diario dela Marina crowd, as Nazis, and at the other end got out of Chile what FDR used in that famous fireside chat...I always did some work free in those days, even when it wasn't necessary, if it would help a colleague. A friend of Nate Goldberg, of the Guild Reporter, was doing p.r. for Warner's on Confessions of a Nazi Spy, Edward G. Robinson's movie, if you remember. For what I did I should have gotten a fortune. It included a sponsored, government preview showing in a deferral theater. I got nothing. (The DC p.r. man was also a friend). The late Senator Nye, who Lil and I both knew, was the sponsor for me. Later he ran what you may remember was a very biased "investigation" of the movie industry in World War II, calling it war propaganda. All these big wheels in Warner's forgot what I had arranged for them. I didn't. After the first day's hearing I phoned the local flack, Frank LaFalce, reminded him, and the next day's shall I say dramatic developments brought a timely end to those "hearings". Without so much as a pass to Warner's theaters or a thanks to me. I ramble as reminded. Not allslop. He was the kind of guy he later showed himself to be. HW 12.16.72